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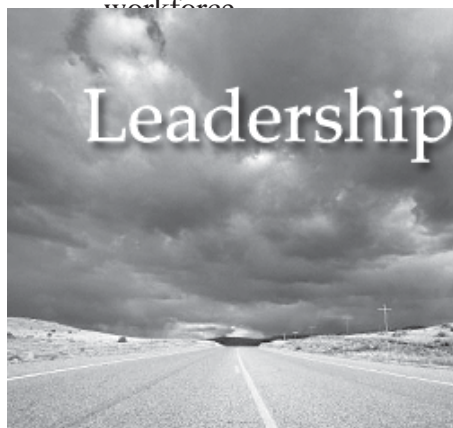
DDC Mentoring Program: <https://ddcnet.ddc.dla.mil/CommandStaff/EEO/mentoring.asp>

DLA Leader Development Guide: <https://dla1.eportal.dla.mil/SAPPortal> (Click on Work, Programs and Initiatives, then DLA Leadership Development)

## The model leader

DLA has identified the characteristics of a good leader as the following:

- Dedicated to the mission and vision of the Agency
- Maintains high ethical standards of conduct
- Creates corporate culture where understanding the customers' needs and world-class service are the norm
- Effectively uses the skills of every employee
- Values and capitalizes on the diversity of the workforce



## Achieving the Mission, Developing Leaders

By Jessica Walter-Groft, DDC Command Affairs

Several recent DLA and Defense Distribution Center (DDC) initiatives have been aimed at enhancing the agency's primary resource: its people.

"Investing in the professional development of our employees is an enterprise-wide priority," said DDC Commander COL Mike Lally, USA.

To do this, DLA has developed programs to enhance leadership skills as well as tools to measure employees' current performance and to determine their strengths and the areas in which they require additional training.

### THE TOOLS

DLA uses the **Climate/Culture Survey** to assess the agency overall in order to provide direction for DLA's transformation efforts. From the feedback provided by employees, the survey revealed an opportunity for improvement in the area of leader development.

Recently, DLA also collected data from employees in order to do a "gap analysis" between the level of skill required to do many of the jobs at DLA and the present level of skill possessed by employees performing those jobs today. "The information gathered from the **DLA Competency Assessment and Management Tool** is used to identify our training needs as we plan ahead to meet the changing requirements of our customers," explained COL Lally.

A different type of competency assessment was adopted in 2003 and is used solely for assessing DLA supervisors and holding them to a higher standard than ever before. Using nine criteria that are considered essential for grooming leaders to achieve DLA's mission, the assessment is completed once per year. **Each supervisor is evaluated on their ability to perform nine mandatory managerial competencies:**

1. Leadership: Inspires and motivates others, demonstrates decisiveness, faces adversity head on and leads by personal example.
2. Teamwork: Creates strong spirit and morale and places team priorities before personal ones.
3. Communication: Presents ideas and information in a clear, concise manner; shares relevant information and listens well.
4. Strategic Focus: Has broad knowledge and perspective of issues facing the organization and can relate strategic objectives to every day operation.
5. Responsibility/Accountability: Acts in the best interest of the organization, takes responsibility for personal actions and honors commitments and obligations.
6. Customer Service: Is committed to providing high quality service and meets or exceeds customer expectations.
7. Professionalism: Acts with integrity, is trusted by others and treats people fairly.

8. Resource Stewardship: Is responsible for assigned resources and plans for efficient use of resources.
9. Innovation/Initiative: Supports continuous improvement, seizes opportunities, pursues professional development and stays current on emerging concepts.

From the feedback gathered by these tools, DLA and DDC have instituted programs designed to target areas of improvement.

**DLA's Enterprise Leader Development Program (ELDP)** is the agency's first inclusive, structured, consistent and formalized program that will support all levels of current leaders in building their competencies.

The program is divided into five tiers depending on a supervisor's amount of experience. For each tier, a customized training program has been developed that includes a combination of group, classroom and peer learning.

The first training to be released is the **Supervisor Certification Program for Tier II** supervisors (those with up to two years of supervisory experience). The first round of supervisors to begin the training included two supervisors from Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, CA (DDJC). Both Chappell Jackson, Woodworker Supervisor, and Adam Crutchfield, Maintenance Mechanic Supervisor, began the training earlier this year and feel that it has helped them to become better supervisors.

Jackson said that the training has taught him to be a better listener and problem-solver. "I had an employee who didn't see why he had to wear a respirator. Before taking this Supervisor Certification Program, I would have told him that it was part of his job and that would have been it. Instead, I explained to him the reason for the respirator and how it protected him," said Jackson.

To assist all DLA leaders in determining the leadership qualities they need to acquire or enhance, a **DLA Leader Development Guide** has been developed. A component of the ELDP, the guide offers a comprehensive list of leadership development options and resources.

Another tool used by DLA and DDC to help employees build leadership skills is the **Ninth House Network**—an e-learning program consisting of 19 training sessions that allow leaders to participate in mock scenarios that demonstrate how their decisions would affect the outcomes in real life situations. The program focuses on developing six core competencies including leadership, communication, team-building and project management.

Another program aiming to build employees' leadership skills is DDC's new **Mentoring Program** designed to enhance individual career goals and the productivity of the organization. "Mentoring is a partnership in which the mentor and protégé share knowledge and information in order to enhance both personal and professional skills," said DDC's EEO Manager Ernesto Lopez.

DLA has also published the *Mentoring Matters Handbook*, an informal guide with tips on how to become or find a mentor. This handbook is the latest resource to be generated by DLA's Enterprise Leader Development